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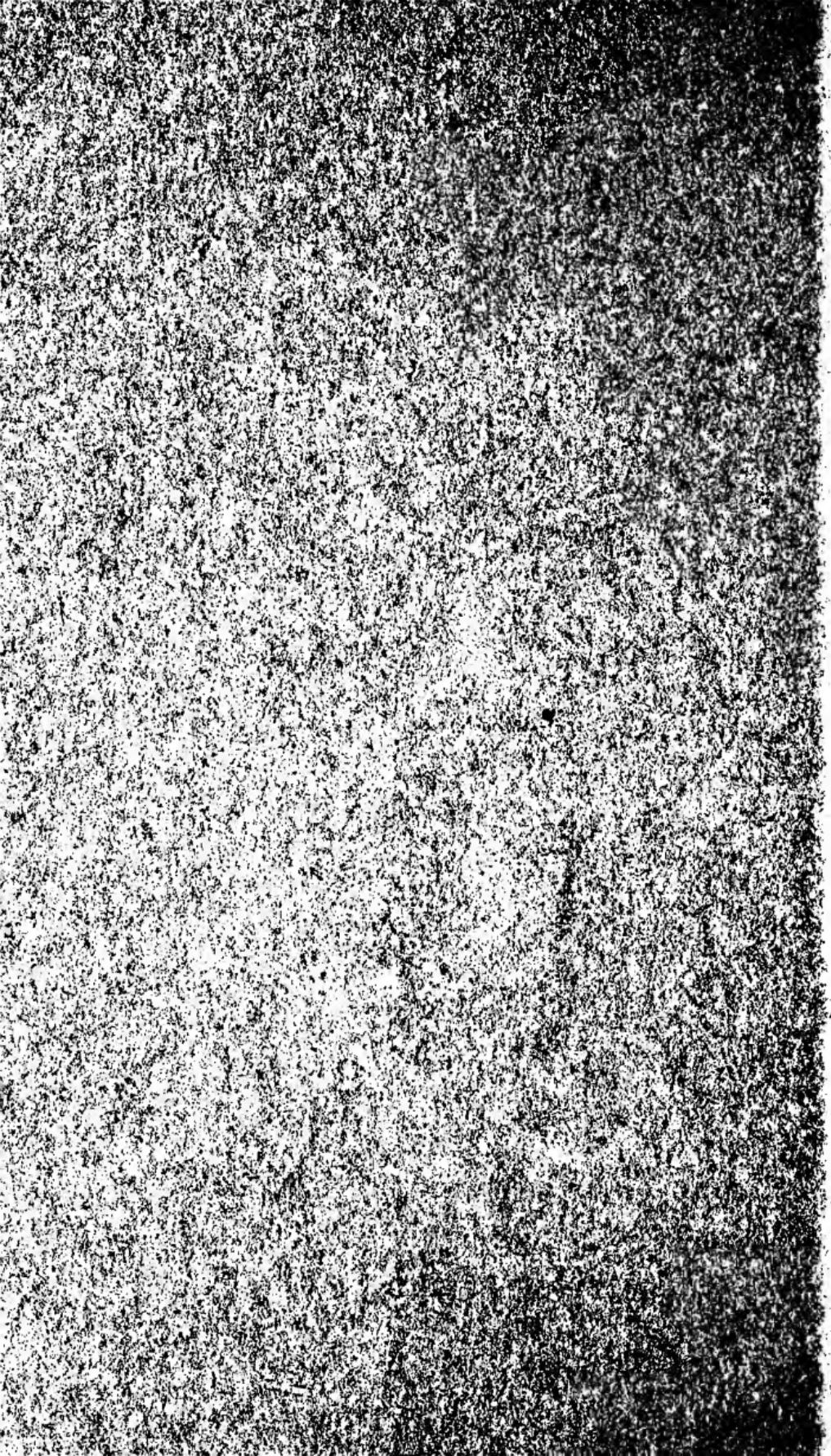
1902

NEW POEMS

BY

WILLIAM WATSON





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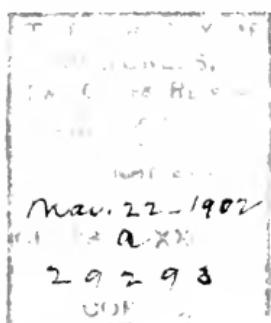
BY

WILLIAM WATSON



JOHN LANE
LIII MAIN STREET · GREENFIELD
AND
THE BODLEY HEAD · LONDON
M DCCC II

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THE UNFADING BLOOM

LIFE is still Life : not yet the hearth is cold,
Not yet the wizard lamp is dimmed at all.

Yon maiden's tresses that about her fall
As Helena's are lovely to behold.

With hoofs of glory and with manes of gold,
Morn on the mountains is majestical ;

And in his domed and galleried audience-hall
Night hangs his glittering armour as of old.

Still lives the lyre ; still on the minstrel's lip
The ancient griefs, the ancient loves, are new.

Still in the moonrise doth the limner dip
His pencil, in the rainbow and the dew.

And still high hearts in noble fellowship
Suffer, and tried by fire are proven true.

THE MOUNTAIN RAPTURE

CONTENTMENT hath its haunt in lowlands green,
And ease of heart by mead and lisping rill;
But joy is on the rent and cloven hill,
And in the pass where strife of gods hath been;
Remembrance of an ecstasy terrene,
Old as the chasms; tradition of a thrill
Coëval with the paroxysm that still
Writhes on the countenance of the seared ravine.
O peaks that out of Earth's great passions rose,
Wearing the written rage, the graven pang,
The adamantine legend of her throes,
Ye are her lyric transports; thus she sang
With wild improvisation: thus, with clang
Of fiery heavings, throbbed into repose.

AN IMPERIAL MEMORY

ON that expectant eve, before the day
When she that ruled us went into the night,
I looked across the wave with misted sight
To yonder isle where dying puissance lay.
And like a valediction the last ray
Haunted her seas ; and a great crimson light
Brake from the depth and triumphed on the height
And seemed to burn all mortal veils away.
“ In splendour is she fleeted hence,” said one ;
Whose comrade answered : “ Augury unblest !
The hue of War attends her setting sun.”
And far her billows flamed through East and West.
But she beside some mainland’s utter rest
Ev’n then was anchored close, her voyaging done.

STANZAS READ AT THE DINNER OF THE
OMAR-KHAY-YAM CLUB, MARCH 21ST,
1902

WE cannot call at will, whene'er we dine,
The Persian's wisdom—or the Persian's wine ;
Or always boast, in this bewildered day,
His sad contentment with the Scheme Divine.

Yet round us, lo ! the Earth's great revel glows :
Comes amorist April, anchorite Winter goes.
Feast we with Omar in the porch of Spring,
Hasten his Nightingale, evoke his Rose.

To-day we are his : we touch his perfumed ground :
To-morrow, London greyness wraps us round.
To-morrow, Business, Labour, Care ; to-night,
Life, with the bay-leaves and the vine-leaves crowned.

THE BALLAD OF SEMMERWATER

(NORTH-COUNTRY LEGEND)

DEEP asleep, deep asleep,
Deep asleep it lies,
The still lake of Semmerwater
Under the still skies.

And many a fathom, many a fathom,
Many a fathom below,
In a king's tower and a queen's bower
The fishes come and go.

Once there stood by Semmerwater
A mickle town and tall;
King's tower and queen's bower
And the wakeman on the wall.

Came a beggar halt and sore:
“ I faint for lack of bread.”
King's tower and queen's bower
Cast him forth unfed.

He knocked at the door of the eller's cot,
The eller's cot in the dale.

They gave him of their oatcake,
They gave him of their ale.

He cursed aloud that city proud,
He cursed it in its pride ;
He cursed it into Semmerwater
Down the brant hillside ;
He cursed it into Semmerwater
There to bide.

King's tower and queen's bower,
And a mickle town and tall ;
By glimmer of scale and gleam of fin
Folk have seen them all.

King's tower and queen's bower,
And weed and reed in the gloom ;
And a lost city in Semmerwater
Deep asleep till Doom.

LEAVETAKING

PASS, thou wild light,
Wild light on peaks that so
Grieve to let go
The day.

Lovely thy tarrying, lovely too is night :
Pass thou away.

Pass, thou wild heart,
Wild heart of youth that still
Hast half a will
To stay.

I grow too old a comrade, let us part.
Pass thou away.



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